gonna have the usual overhead here. (MONA *signals to the band and sings.*)

YOU DON'T GET NO FINES, GIRL . . .

GIRLS.

YOU DON'T PAY NO BAIL

MISS MONA.

YOU DON'T SPEND NO TIME, GIRL
SITTIN' IN THE JAIL

GIRLS.

SO YOU CAN SEE THAT IT'S A BIG ADVANTAGE
IF MISS MONA IS THE BOSS

MISS MONA.

I GOT ONLY ONE MORE THING TO SAY
THERE'S A GROUP RATE ON BLUE CROSS

ANGEL. When do we start?

MISS MONA. You can go on the night shift. I'm not finished with Shy here. Ruby Rae show Angel to her room. And hunny, you better git some rest. Friday's payday at the cotton gin and it's gonna be a long night.

RUBY RAE. Come on, Angel.

(*The* GIRLS ALL *sing the following verse as* THEY *go off to their rooms leaving* MISS MONA *and* SHY *alone on the stage.*)

GIRLS.

IT'S JUST A PIDDLY SQUATTIN' OLD TIME COUNTRY PLACE
NOTHIN' TOO HIGH TONED
JES LOTS OF GOOD WILL
AND MAYBE ONE SMALL THRILL
BUT THERE'S NOTHIN' DIRTY GOIN' ON.

(ALL *freeze except* MONA *and* SHY.)

ACT ONE

SCENE 3

SHY *drapes herself on the stairs as sexily as possible.*

MISS MONA. What are you doin' here, hunny?

(SHY *is near tears and* SHE *shakes her head in a cross between bewilderment and emotion.*)

MISS MONA. (*Continued.*) I think maybe you better just head on back home.

SHY. I'm broke.

MISS MONA. Well, I could lend you fifty dollars. Course you'd have to pay me back someday.

SHY. It ain't that, m'am. I got nowheres to go home to.

MISS MONA. Boyfriend treat you bad?

SHY. No, M'am.

MISS MONA. Folks run you off?

SHY. No, but I ain't never goin' back there. (SHE *glares straight at* MONA *and we see a toughness for the first time.*)

MISS MONA. Did your Daddy get sweet on you, hunny?

(SHY*'s head goes down to her lap again.* SHE *can't answer, but we know it's true.*)

MISS MONA. (*Continued.*) Well, that ain't the first time it's happened to a girl, it ain't gonna be the last. Men ain't all bad, they're just 92% bad. Maybe I can get you on as a waitress over at the cafe.

SHY. No. I don't want no waitressin' job! I done thought about this. I'm gonna stay right here . . . I mean if you'll let me.

MIS MONA. Well now, you are gonna take a lot of fixin'. I reckon those are your good clothes.

SHY. Yes, M'am.

MISS MONA. Jewel can take you over to Austin tomorrow. You see, hunny, my girls dress real nice. Men like that. The day shift wears sort of slinky sports outfits and the night shift wears long dresses. You can pay me back out of your first earnings. If I can get you in at the beauty parlor this afternoon you can be ready to start tomorrow. That's about the only sit down place you can go in town, and then only the back two stations. Hell, I was gonna put my own in out here, but the Chamber of Commerce bitched. Unfair competition and free enterprise or some such . . .

(SHY *grabs her, sobbing and clutching her.*)

MISS MONA. (*Continued.*) Come on now, hunny, you're gonna mess up my outfit.